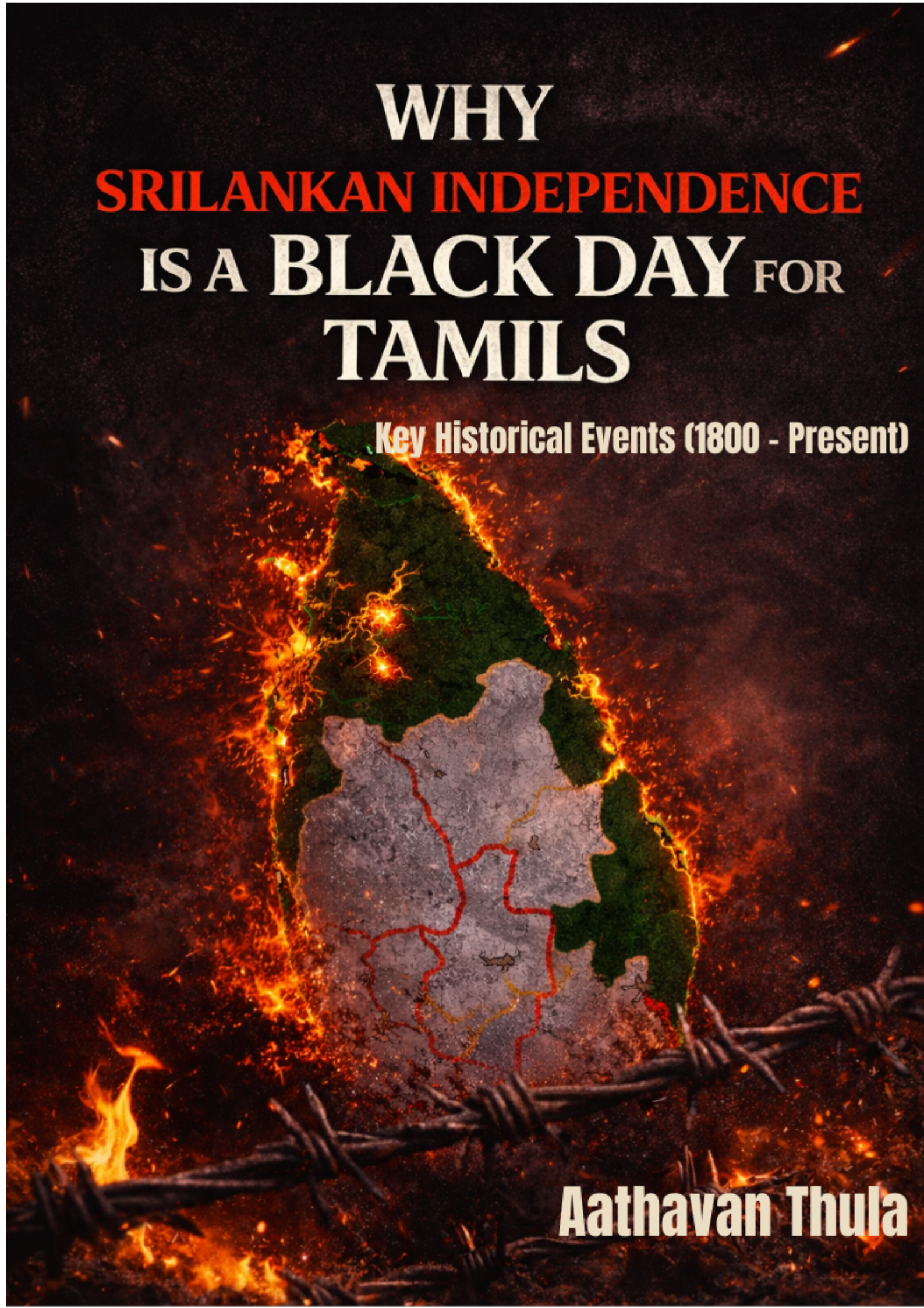
WHY SRILANKAN INDEPENDENCE IS A BLACK DAY FOR TAMILS

Key Historical Events (1800 - Present)



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Key Historical Events (1800 – Present)

1800–1815 | Colonial Centralisation

- British dismantle regional sovereignties
- Tamil, Kandyan & other autonomous systems absorbed into a single crown administration

→ Tamil political autonomy erased for the first time

1833 | Colebrooke–Cameron Reforms

- North & East forcibly merged with the South
- Unitary administration imposed for colonial efficiency

→ Foundations of the modern unitary Sinhala-majoritarian state

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1915 | Anti-Minority Riots & Emergency Rule

- Widespread anti-Muslim violence tolerated by colonial authorities
- Sinhala Buddhist elites emerge as "protectors" of the majority
- Martial law imposed

→ Ethnic violence legitimized as political pressure

1919 | Formation of the Ceylon National Congress (CNC)

- Led predominantly by Sinhala elites
- Claimed to represent "all Ceylonese"
- Tamil leaders marginalised within the movement

→ Independence movement already Sinhala-dominated

1921 | Manning Reforms

- Introduced limited self-rule
- **Communal representation weakened**
- Sinhala majority gains numerical advantage

→ Establishes Sinhala national dominance, ending Tamil national safeguards

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1924 | Sinhala-Only Nationalist Narratives Rise

- Buddhism framed as the core of national identity
- Tamils increasingly portrayed as "minority outsiders"

→ Nationhood defined ethnically, not civically

1931 | Donoughmore Constitution

- Universal adult franchise introduced
- Communal representation abolished
- Sinhalese gains permanent electoral dominance

→ Tamils reduced to a permanent political minority

1936 | "Pan-Sinhala" Ministry & State-Sponsored Colonisation

After the **1936 State Council elections** held under the **Donoughmore Constitution**, the Sinhalese leadership formed a **"Pan-Sinhala" Board of Ministers**, excluding Tamil representation from executive power.

D. S. Senanayake was appointed **Minister of Agriculture**.

Using this portfolio, he **initiated state-sponsored Sinhala colonisation schemes** in the **traditional Tamil regions of the North-East**, particularly in the Eastern Province.

- Tamil lands were reclassified as "state land"
- Sinhala settlers were settled with state assistance
- Administrative boundaries were altered to weaken Tamil political strength

• **Amparai was carved out as a separate electorate**, deliberately engineered as a **Sinhala-safe seat**

→ Demographic engineering begins under the guise of development

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1939–1945 | World War II Period

- Tamil demands for balanced representation ignored
- Sinhala leaders consolidate administrative power

→ No constitutional protection prepared for minorities

1944 | Soulbury Commission Submissions

- Tamil leaders request federal safeguards & minority protection
- Requests rejected or diluted

→ Clear warnings ignored deliberately

1947 | Soulbury Constitution Finalised

- Unitary state structure confirmed
- Weak minority protections
- Buddhism given implicit priority

→ Independence designed to benefit the majority

1948 | "Independence" & Immediate Exclusion

- Power transferred to Sinhala elite
- **Ceylon Citizenship Act** disenfranchises Plantation Tamils

→ Independence begins with mass statelessness

1948–1949 | Citizenship Acts & Mass Disenfranchisement

After so-called independence, the Sri Lankan state enacted laws that **stripped citizenship from an entire Tamil population**.

Key Laws

- **1948 – Ceylon Citizenship Act**
- **1949 – Indian & Pakistani Residents (Citizenship) Act**

Impact

- **Over 1 million Malayaha (Plantation) Tamils** were rendered **stateless**
- Denied:
  - Citizenship
  - Voting rights
  - Political representation
  - Civil and social protections
- Tamil plantation workers who built the colonial economy were **legally erased overnight**

Intent & Outcome

- Laws were designed to:
  - Engineer electoral outcomes
  - Permanently weaken Tamil political power
- This was **the first act of post-independence ethnic cleansing by law**

→ Independence begins with mass statelessness

1956 | Sinhala Only Act

- Tamil language removed from state administration
- Peaceful Tamil protests met with violence

→ Structural discrimination legalized

1958 | First Island-wide Anti-Tamil Pogrom

- Hundreds killed
- Mass displacement of Tamils

→ Citizenship without protection

1961 | Tamil Civil Disobedience Crushed

- Non-violent Satyagraha
- Army deployed in Tamil areas

→ Militarisation replaces democracy

1972 | Republican Constitution

- Buddhism given foremost place
- Tamil federal demands ignored

→ Constitutional exclusion of Tamils

1974 | Jaffna Cultural Tragedy

- Tamil Research Conference violence
- Intellectual & cultural repression

1977 | Pogrom After Tamil Democratic Mandate

- Tamils vote for self-determination
- Response: violence, not dialogue

→ Democracy punished

1981 | Burning of Jaffna Public Library

- 95,000+ Tamil manuscripts destroyed
- State actors involved

→ Cultural genocide

1983 | Black July

- State-aided pogrom
- Thousands killed
- Tamil diaspora created

→ Genocide. Armed conflict becomes inevitable

India & Sri Lankan State Violence Against Tamils

1987 | Indian State Intervention

- **India** intervenes directly in the Tamil national question
- Indo-Lanka Accord imposed **without Tamil consent**
- Tamil right to self-determination subordinated to Indian regional interests

→ External power overrides Tamil political agency

Escalation to Multi-Actor Atrocities & Genocidal Phase

1987–1990 | Eastern Province: Multi-Actor Atrocities Against Tamils

In the Eastern Province, Tamil civilians were subjected to **systematic violence by multiple armed actors**:

- **Indian military (IPKF)** operations in Tamil villages
- **Sri Lanka military** actions and counter-insurgency
- **State-armed Home Guards** and **Islamic militant groups** operating with impunity

Patterns included:

- Village massacres
- Targeted killings of Tamil civilians
- Forced displacement
- Sexual violence and disappearances

→ Eastern Province becomes a theatre of coordinated ethnic terror

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1990–2000 | Genocidal Practices Intensify

Chemmani Mass Graves (Jaffna)

- Discovery of **mass graves** linked to Sri Lankan security forces
- Victims include **disappeared Tamil civilians**, including youth
- Judicial proceedings stalled; full truth never revealed

→ Physical evidence of genocide and enforced disappearance

2006–2009 | Final War Phase – Extermination Campaign

- Indiscriminate bombardment of densely populated Tamil areas
- **Alleged use of prohibited weapons**, including:
  - Chemical agents
  - Cluster munitions
- Designated "No Fire Zones" repeatedly shelled
- Tens of thousands of Tamil civilians killed

→ Genocide. Sri Lankan state-enabled campaign of mass civilian killing carried out in total impunity

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2009 | War Ends – Structural Genocide Continues

- No independent investigation or accountability
- Military occupation entrenched in Tamil homeland
- **Sinhalisation and Buddhisisation enforced under armed protection**

→ Genocide shifts from kinetic to administrative. War by other means

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2010–2025 | Post-War Structural Oppression

- No political solution
- No war-crime accountability
- Demographic & cultural erasure

→ Independence still denied

From Historical Dispossession to National Survival

For a nation that has been systematically dispossessed of its political power, mother tongue, ancestral land, education, security, and countless lives, yet continues to yearn for freedom, **struggle is not a choice; it is the source of strength**. The survival of such a nation depends on interpreting every dimension of life through the lens of **Tamil nationalism**, and engaging with the world from that standpoint. It is only through this national consciousness that the existence of the people can be sustained.

Tamil National consciousness must not reject progress. Knowledge must advance at the pace of science, and living standards must be elevated, not as assimilation, but as empowerment. Fellow Tamil nationalists must be embraced beyond divisions of caste and religion, recognized first and foremost as members of the same nation. The upliftment of one Tamil is inseparable from the upliftment of the nation itself; therefore, each individual bears responsibility to contribute to the collective rise.

Tamil nationalism is the shield that protects the people.

Tamil nationalism is the political framework of resistance.

Tamil nationalism is the condition of existence itself.

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